

CORNUFER UNICOLOR TSCHUDI 1838 (AMPHIBIA, SALIENTIA);
REQUEST FOR SUPPRESSION UNDER THE PLENARY POWERS
Z.N.(S.) 1749

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In 1838, Tschudi (*Classification der Batrachier* . . . Neuchâtel, p. 28 a pre-print; also published in *Mem. Soc. Neuchâtel*, 2, 1839 [1840]) described the new genus and species *Cornufer unicolor*. He based the description on two specimens said to be from New Guinea. Subsequently, the name *Cornufer* came to be used for ranid frogs found on islands from Fiji through the Solomon Islands and New Guinea to the Philippine Islands. The most recently published list (Brown, 1965, *Breviora* 218) includes 27 species of *Cornufer*.

There are only two direct references to the type specimens of *Cornufer unicolor* in the literature following the original description: Duméril and Bibron (1841, *Erpétologie Générale*, 8 : 616-618) redescribed the syntype located in the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris; van Kampen (1923, *Amphibia of the Indo-Australian archipelago*: 105) identified the syntype in the Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie, Leiden, as a microhylid frog, *Sphenophryne cornuta*. A specimen referred by Duméril (1853, *Ann. Sci. nat., Zool.* (3) 19 : 174) to *C. unicolor* evidently is the only other individual of this species reported in the literature.

Because no additional specimens were discovered in more than 100 years and because the published descriptions were inadequate to permit me to resolve the question of the identity of the syntype in the Museum in Paris, I asked Dr. Jean Guibé if the specimen might still be found in the Museum. Dr. Guibé found the long lost specimen, which bears number 747, and generously sent it for my examination.

Elsewhere (Copeia, in press) I present the results of a detailed investigation of the identity of the Paris syntype and designate it lectotype of *Cornufer unicolor*. Designation of the Paris specimen as lectotype is justifiable on two grounds: van Kampen (*loc. cit.*) did this in spirit if not in fact when he identified the syntype in the Leiden Museum as a specimen of another species although he continued to recognize *Cornufer unicolor* as valid; the original description was based almost entirely on the specimen in the Paris Museum.

The lectotype is not a ranid frog as has been supposed, but possesses the skeletal characteristics of the leptodactylid genus *Eleutherodactylus*: vomerine and maxillary teeth present; terminal phalanges T-shaped; pectoral girdle arciferal; sternum without a bony style; sacral diapophyses cylindrical; free coccyx articulating by paired condyles. My examination of the specimen verified the descriptions of external features given by Tschudi (*loc. cit.*) and Duméril and Bibron (*loc. cit.*) and permitted evaluation of other characters as well. I regard the lectotype as an individual of the species described by Barbour (1914, *Mem. Mus. comp. Zool.*, 44 : 252) as *Leptodactylus inoptatus*, type locality Diquini, Haiti, and known at the present time as *Eleutherodactylus inoptatus*.

Cornufer Tschudi, 1838, antedates *Eleutherodactylus* Duméril and Bibron, 1841 (*op. cit.*: 620; see Myers, 1962, *Copeia*: 195-202 for a discussion of the generic name *Eleutherodactylus*), and according to the Law of Priority the former should replace the latter. Such strict application of the Law could create considerable confusion. Not only does the genus *Eleutherodactylus* include more than two hundred species, with all that implies for the literature of systematics and related fields, but species of this genus also have been used in experimental studies in such fields as embryology and genetics. Use of the name *Cornufer* for the ranid frogs has not achieved stability, and *Platymantis*, the name that is available to replace *Cornufer*, has been used widely and recently for a large proportion of the species placed in *Cornufer* by Brown (*op. cit.*). Therefore, it seems in the best interest of stability of nomenclature to suppress the name *Cornufer* and validate the use of *Eleutherodactylus*.

I feel that the specific name *unicolor* should be suppressed along with *Cornufer*, although it is demonstrably a senior synonym of *inoptatus*. The name *inoptatus* has been in use for more than 50 years, and replacing it with *unicolor* would serve no useful purpose. Such replacement would carry the seed of future confusion, for there is a valid species *Eleutherodactylus unicolor* Stejneger (1904, *Rept. U.S. nat. Mus.*, 1902: 597) of Puerto Rico for which a replacement name would have to be supplied.

Accordingly, I request the International Commission of Zoological Nomenclature:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the following names for the purposes of the Law of Priority but not for those of the Law of Homonymy:
 - (a) the generic name *Cornufer* Tschudi, 1838;
 - (b) the specific name *unicolor* Tschudi, 1838, as published in the binomen *Cornufer unicolor*;
- (2) to place the generic name *Eleutherodactylus* Duméril and Bibron, 1841 (gender : masculine), type-species, by monotypy, *Hylodes martinicensis* Tschudi, 1838, on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology;
- (3) to place the following specific names on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology:
 - (a) *martinicensis* Tschudi, 1838, as published in the binomen *Hylodes martinicensis* (type-species of *Eleutherodactylus* Duméril and Bibron, 1841);
 - (b) *inoptatus* Barbour, 1914, as published in the binomen *Leptodactylus inoptatus*;
- (4) to place the generic name suppressed under the plenary powers in (1) (a) above on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology;
- (5) to place the specific name suppressed under the plenary powers in (1) (b) above on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology.